



The Sites and Operable Units at Travis AFB: An Introduction

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This fact sheet is one of a series prepared for RAB members about the Travis Air Force Base (AFB) Installation Restoration Program (IRP).

The IRP at Travis AFB is intended to remediate contaminated sites, but many of the restoration activities are organized by Operable Unit (OU). This fact sheet is intended to help clarify the difference between the sites and OUs at Travis AFB.

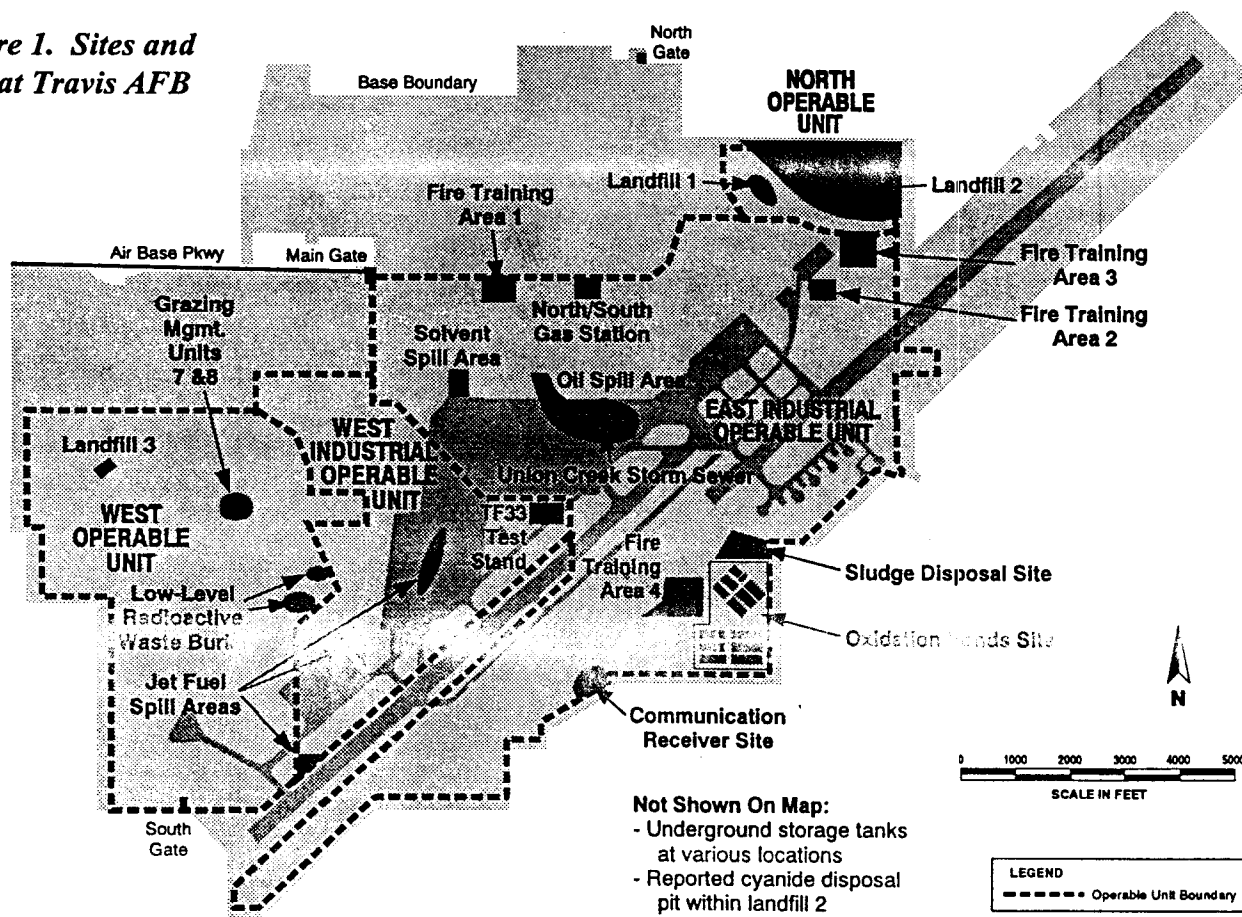
WHAT IS A SITE?

A *site* for the purposes of the IRP is a discrete area where contaminants may have been released to the environment and that is tracked on the Air Force's list of sites for the installation. Travis AFB currently has 27 sites on the list, seven of which are at off-base

locations such as golf courses or annexes.

The list of sites can be increased if other areas of contamination are discovered. Areas where contaminants may have been released but that have not been validated as sites are called *areas of concern (AOCs)*. Eleven AOCs have been identified at Travis AFB. In addition, an assessment of currently operating facilities identified over 100 other areas where contaminants may have been released. All of these areas—sites, AOCs, and other potential sites—will be investigated to determine if they are contaminated. If they are, the need for remediation will also be addressed.

Figure 1. Sites and OUs at Travis AFB



Most of the 20 sites at Travis AFB proper (Figure 1) can be categorized as one of the following types: spill areas, landfills, fire training areas, or sludge ponds. Contaminants in these sites are typically solvents, fuels, and oils. At one site, for example, spilled jet fuel has reached the water table (about 8 feet below the surface) and is being removed from the groundwater as part of the cleanup program. A few areas are being investigated for other types of contamination: the B-29 crash site, for example, which is an AOC, has been investigated for possible radioactive contamination.

THE OPERABLE UNITS

The 20 sites on base have been grouped into four *Operable Units (OUs)* (see Figure 1). An OU is a geographical area that is being investigated as one entity. The OUs at Travis AFB were delineated based on the geography and the types of operations in each area. The North OU (NOU), for example, encompasses the two largest landfills on base. Two OUs are areas of industrial operations (the East Industrial and the West Industrial, or EIOU and WIOU). The fourth OU, the West, Annexes, and Basewide OU (WABOU, pronounced "Waboo"), encompasses undeveloped land on base as well as off-base areas.

Travis AFB was treated initially as a single OU with one comprehensive cleanup schedule. However, the process of addressing environmental concerns can be complex, and the more complex the OU, the more complex this process becomes. To better manage its investigative and cleanup activities, the Air Force and the regulatory agencies divided Travis AFB into four geographic OUs in 1993. Each OU has its own schedule. Work on the OUs is closely coordinated, but is focused on the needs of the individual OUs.

THE NOU

- Size: Approximately 90 acres.
- Location: Northeast corner of Travis AFB.
- Sites: Landfills 1 and 2.

THE EIOU

- Size: Approximately 1,700 acres.
- Location: Eastern half of Travis AFB.
- Sites: Union Creek storm sewer system; Fire Training Areas 1, 2, 3, and 4; Sanitary Waste Treatment Plant (STP) sludge disposal area; solvent spill area; oil spill area; STP inactive oxidation ponds, and a tank and spill area at the North-South gas station.

THE WIOU

- Size: Approximately 500 acres.

- Location: West-central portion of Travis AFB.
- Sites: Jet Fuel Spill Areas, and the TF33 Test Stand Area.

THE WABOU

- Size: Approximately 700 acres on base.
- Location: Southwestern corner of Travis AFB, plus several off-base annexes.
- Sites: Landfill 3; underground storage tanks, two low-level radioactive waste sites; grazing management units 7 and 8; plus off-base sites.

WHAT WORK IS TAKING PLACE IN THE FOUR OUS?

Each OU is now or soon will be undergoing a Remedial Investigation (RI). The RI effort characterizes the types of contaminants (if any) at a site and their concentration, and makes recommendations. If contamination is identified at concentrations that exceed regulatory criteria and/or pose a risk to human health or the environment, then the site will be evaluated in a Feasibility Study. If the need for an expedited action is identified, a removal action may be undertaken. Such is the case at the Storm Water Outfall A along Union Creek and in the Tower Area Removal Action (TARA), where the need to remove TCE from groundwater was identified. These actions are described in other fact sheets prepared for the RAB.

The general schedule of efforts at Travis AFB is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2.
The schedule of IRP activities in the OUs

